

REMARKS

Claims 10-21 were examined in the Office Action September 19, 2005.

Claim Numbering Objection: In response to the objection regarding the claim numbering, the Applicants respectfully note that the as-filed Application contained claims 1-9, based on the Article 36 amendments filed in the international application to which priority is claimed (WO 00/77736). *See, e.g.*, Form PCT/IPEA/409 dated 23.08.2001 (paragraph 4, noting new claims 7-9). The Applicants' December 11, 2001 Preliminary Amendment therefore numbered the new claims from claim 10. Accordingly, withdrawal of the claim objection and restoration of the claim numbering to claims 10-25 is respectfully requested.

Claim Amendments: The Applicants have amended independent claims 10 and 21 to incorporate the limitations of dependent claim 16, with conforming amendments made to cancel claims 16-18 without prejudice to the subject matter therein. In addition, the Applicants have clarified that, where claim 16 recited scanning one of recorded pairs of stereo images "for significant features of objects" and "determining a spacing of the significant features," the determining step refers to the spacing between features of *individual* objects, rather than the spacing between different objects, *i.e.*, "a spacing of *at least one object's* significant features." *See, e.g.*, Specification at ¶¶ [0025]-[0026].

The portion of the EP 0 874 331 reference ("EP '331") cited as teaching the limitations of claim 16 (renumbered claim 13), column 3 at lines 23-45, teaches only the processing of images by image processing computer 30 to determine the distance of individual elements from the stereo cameras (derived by

triangulation from observed differences in position noted in the left and right stereo camera images). EP '331 at 3:38-45. Nothing in this reference or the Laumeyer publication (U.S. Patent Publication US 2001/0036293 A1) contains any teaching or suggestion of the present approach to feature extraction and recognition. Accordingly, claims 10 and 21, as amended, recite subject matter which is patentable over EP '331 and/or Laumeyer under § 103(a).

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the pending § 103(a) rejections is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Applicants respectfully submit that claims 10-15 and 19-21 are in condition for allowance, and requests issuance of a Notice of Allowance for these claims.

If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

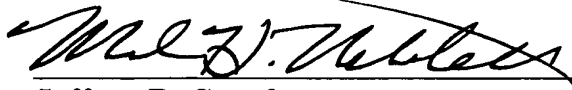
If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit

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Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey D. Sanok", written over a horizontal line.

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